

**Implementing the Federal Personal Responsibility
and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act**

AUGUST 17, 1998

Q. What is the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996?

A. In 1996, the Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was signed into law. The PRWORA requires government agencies in the United States to eliminate public benefits to individuals who cannot provide proof of their legal status in the U.S. 'Public benefits' include a broad range of services and programs, including "any...professional...or commercial license...provided by an agency of a State." In August 1996, Governor Wilson signed Executive Order W-135-96, calling upon California's state agencies, departments, boards, and commissions to implement provisions in a non-discriminatory manner "as expeditiously and as reasonably practicable." A subsequent review identified over 200 state programs affected by the new law.

Q. How will PRWORA impact applicants and licensees?

A. The Federal law mandates and the Governor's Executive Order requires the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to verify citizenship or legal residence status of all those licensed, registered, and/or certified by DCA's twenty-seven semi-autonomous boards, four bureaus and three programs. When the program is implemented, *new applicants* will be required to submit proof of legal status in the United States. Individuals with *existing licenses* will be required to submit proof of legal status at their next renewal. Because DCA is responsible for more than 2.1 million licensees in over 200 professions, incremental implementation is necessary.

Q. When will the requirement be implemented?

A. New regulations must be filed and approved by the Office of Administrative Law before they can be implemented. Implementing the requirement to submit proof of legal status in the U.S. is anticipated to begin in November 1998. Specific dates will be announced to applicants and licensees by each board, bureau, committee, commission, and program. Since the requirement will include a verification of documents, it's the intent of DCA to make this requirement a fair, accurate, and timely process for all applicants and licensees.

Q. What documents will be accepted as proof of legal status in the U.S.?

A. The most common document used for proof of legal status in the U.S. is a birth certificate. In most instances, applicants and licensees will be able to obtain a **certified** copy of the birth certificate through the county recorder's office where they were born, or from the Office of Vital Statistics in the state where they were born. Attached is a listing of telephone numbers for the Office of Vital Statistics for all states, and the U.S. Territories, and Possessions. Besides a birth certificate, a number of other documents are acceptable for establishing proof of legal status in the U.S. A list of acceptable documents is attached.

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Q. *When will the documents need to be submitted?*

A. As previously indicated, each board, bureau, committee, commission, and program will notify their respective applicants and licensees when the documents will need to be submitted for verification. However, since it may take weeks to obtain a copy of a birth certificate, and several months to obtain other documents, it is advisable to begin obtaining them as early as possible. This preplanning will help ensure minimal delays on the applicants' or licensee's part to process the application or renewal for licensure.

Please plan early to avoid processing delays!

Q. *Where can additional information be obtained regarding the new federal requirement?*

A. If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the new requirement, please contact the licensing unit of your board, bureau, committee, commission, or program. Telephone numbers are located in the yellow pages of your local telephone book, or are listed on DCA's website at <http://www.dca.ca.gov/>.



Attachment
Telephone Numbers
for
Vital Statistics Offices



State	Telephone No.	State	Telephone No.
Alabama	(334) 613-5418	Montana	(406) 444-4228
Alaska	(907) 465-3391	Nebraska	(402) 471-2871
Arizona	(602) 255-3260	Nevada	(702) 687-4480
Arkansas	(501) 661-2336	New Hampshire	(603) 271-4654
California	(916) 445-2684	New Jersey	(609) 292-4087
Colorado	(303) 756-4465	New Mexico	(505) 827-0121
Connecticut	(860) 509-7897	New York	(518) 474-3077
Delaware	(302) 739-4721	North Carolina	(919) 733-3526
District of Columbia	(202) 645-5962	North Dakota	(701) 328-2360
Florida	(904) 487-3160	Ohio	(614) 466-2531
Georgia	(404) 656-4900	Oklahoma	(405) 271-4040
Hawaii	(808) 586-4533	Oregon	(503) 731-4095
Idaho	(208) 334-5988	Pennsylvania	(412) 656-3126
Illinois	(217) 782-6555	Rhode Island	(401) 222-2811
Indiana	(317) 233-2700	South Carolina	(803) 734-4830
Iowa	(515) 281-4944	South Dakota	(605) 773-3355
Kansas	(913) 296-1400	Tennessee	(615) 741-1763
Kentucky	(502) 564-4212	Texas	(512) 458-7111
Louisiana	(504) 922-1184	Utah	(801) 538-6105
Maine	(207) 287-3184	Vermont	(802) 863-7275
Maryland	(800) 832-3277	Virginia	(804) 225-5000
Massachusetts	(617) 753-8600	Washington	(360) 753-5936
Michigan	(517) 335-8656	West Virginia	(304) 558-2931
Minnesota	(612) 623-5121	Wisconsin	(608) 266-1371
Mississippi	(601) 960-7981	Wyoming	(307) 777-7591
Missouri	(314) 658-1134		
Territories and United States Possessions			
American Samoa	(694) 633-1222	Puerto Rico	(809) 728-7980 x238
Canal Zone	(800) 272-7854	Virgin Islands/St. Croix St. Thomas	(809) 773-4050
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	(670) 235-6401	Guam	011-671-734-7292